

Pedestrian Safety Awareness Campaign

The Delaware Pedestrian Council and the Delaware State Police have partnered together to increase awareness and announce that October is Pedestrian Safety Awareness Month in Delaware. It is estimated that in 2018, 6,227 pedestrians died in motor vehicle crashes across the county and according to the Governor's Highway Safety Association, this is the highest number of pedestrian fatalities since 1990.

The number of pedestrians killed in traffic crashes in 2018 was 24, down from 35 in 2017. Although a decrease this still represents 22% of all traffic crash fatalities. The national average is about 16%.

The Delaware State Police, Members of the Pedestrian Council and its Education and Enforcement subcommittee will be conducting a public education campaign to raise awareness about ways to make walking safer for everyone.

The campaign is targeted to both pedestrians and drivers. For pedestrians, the goal is to encourage everyone to do the following:

- Be visible. When walking at night, wear bright-colored clothing. Use a flashlight or reflective items.
- Never dart out. Cross streets at crosswalks or intersections when possible. This is where drivers expect pedestrians.
- Use pedestrian pushbuttons and wait for the walk signal to cross.
- Take your time to cross. If a crosswalk or intersection is not available, locate a well-lit area and wait for a gap in traffic that allows you enough time to cross safely. Continue to watch traffic as you cross.

- Make eye contact with drivers as they approach. Never assume a driver sees you.
- Walk on sidewalks whenever they are available. Walk on the shoulder facing traffic if no sidewalk is available.
- Keep alert at all times. Don't be distracted by cellphones and electronic devices that take your eyes (and ears) off the road.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs. They impair your judgment and coordination.

For drivers, the goal is to urge them to:

- Always keep an eye out for pedestrians. Pedestrians may be walking where they should not be or may be hard to see—especially in poorly lit conditions, including dusk/dawn/night and poor weather.
- Always stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk or where pedestrian crosswalk signs are posted.
- Never pass vehicles stopped at a crosswalk. They may be stopped for a crossing pedestrian.
- Slow down and be prepared to stop when turning or otherwise entering a crosswalk.
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol and drugs.
- Keep alert at all times. Don't use your cellphones and electronic devices while driving.

Nighttime visibility is one of the most important pedestrian safety issues. **The majority of pedestrian fatalities occur between 6:00 p.m. and 12:00 a.m.** So the campaign will include events to encourage the public to carry a flashlight and wear reflective materials when walking at night or early morning when it is dark.

Troopers and Representatives of the Pedestrian Council and its Education and Enforcement Subcommittee will be at the following venues to talk to the public and hand out educational materials and reflective safety items:

New Castle County

Goodwill Claymont

2701 Philadelphia Pike, Claymont

Thursday, October 17th, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Kent County

Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing

684 Forest Street, Dover

Thursday, October 10th, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Browns Branch County Park

1415 Killens Pond Road, Harrington

Wednesday, October 30th, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Sussex County

The CROSS Building

703 E. King Street, Seaford

Thursday, October 3rd, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: Maria Andaya, Pedestrian Coordinator, Delaware Pedestrian Council 302-760-2458 maria.andaya@delaware.gov

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Presented by the Director of Public Information, Sgt. Richard Bratz,

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